

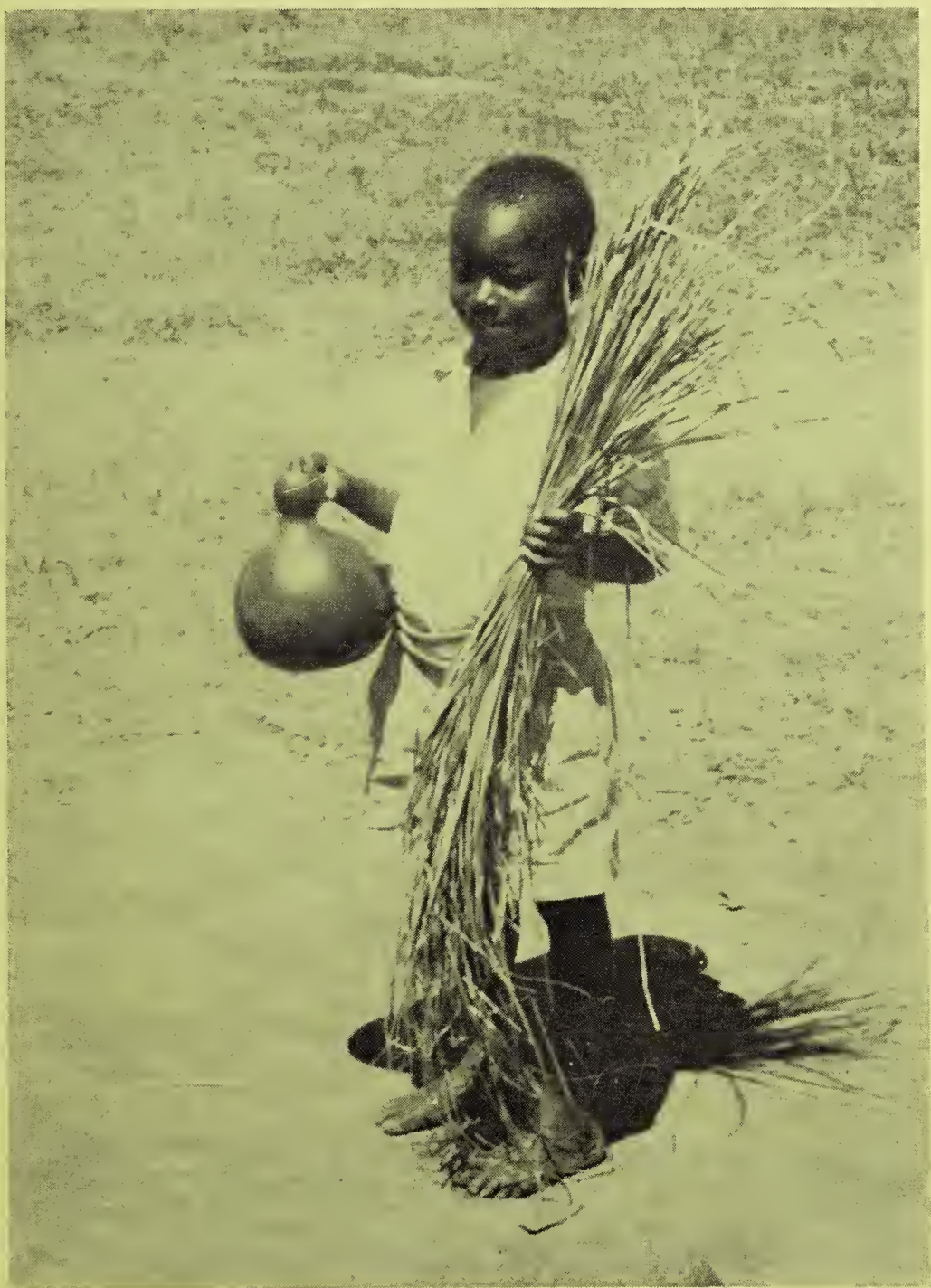
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AMONG FRIENDS



IN KENYA
AFRICA

This little first grader is going to school with his gourd for drinking water and his handful of grass for the hand-craft lesson. He will make a braided grass rope, and then the teacher will help him wind the rope into a tight ball to play with in game time.

AMONG FRIENDS
IN KENYA
AFRICA

Published by

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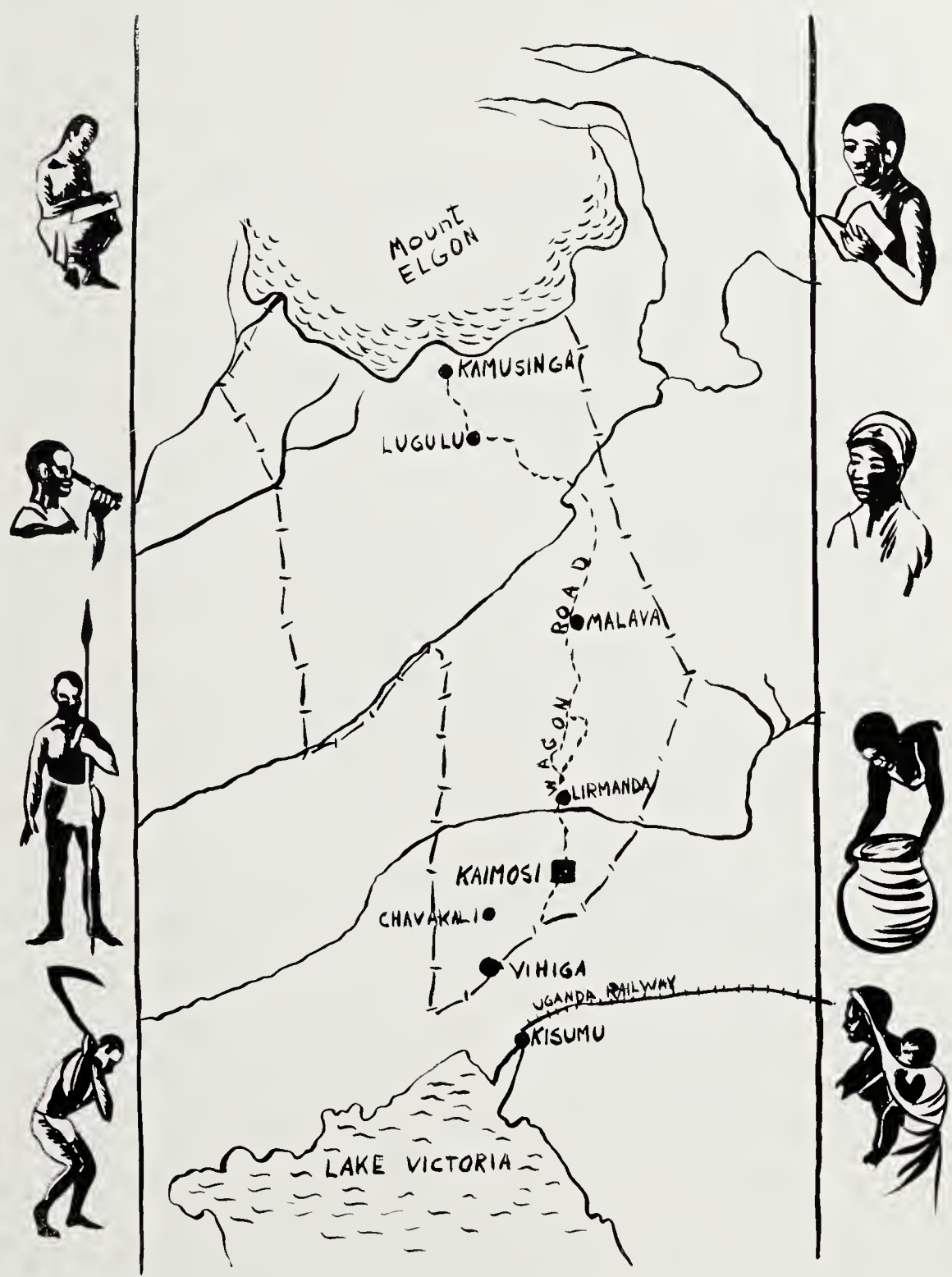
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FRIENDS AREA



KENYA, AFRICA



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FRIENDS IN NYANZA PROVINCE, KENYA

Nyanza Province of Kenya takes its name from Lake Victoria, for Nyanza means Lake. Friends began mission work here in 1902 and have tried to follow the example of Jesus, who went into villages teaching, preaching and healing. Today, in His name, teachers, preachers, doctors, nurses and other missionaries are busy helping the Africans and teaching them how to help each other.

African farmers are learning better methods so more food can be raised for their families, and the children can have better food to help them grow big and strong.

Come with us through the pages of this book. See the land of Kenya and meet some of our African friends. See how they live and what they do. As you learn about them, we hope you will feel that they are your friends, too.



The frangipani tree has waxy white flowers that smell very sweet. School children use the sticky sap for paste when they want to seal an envelope.

Flowers, Birds and Animals

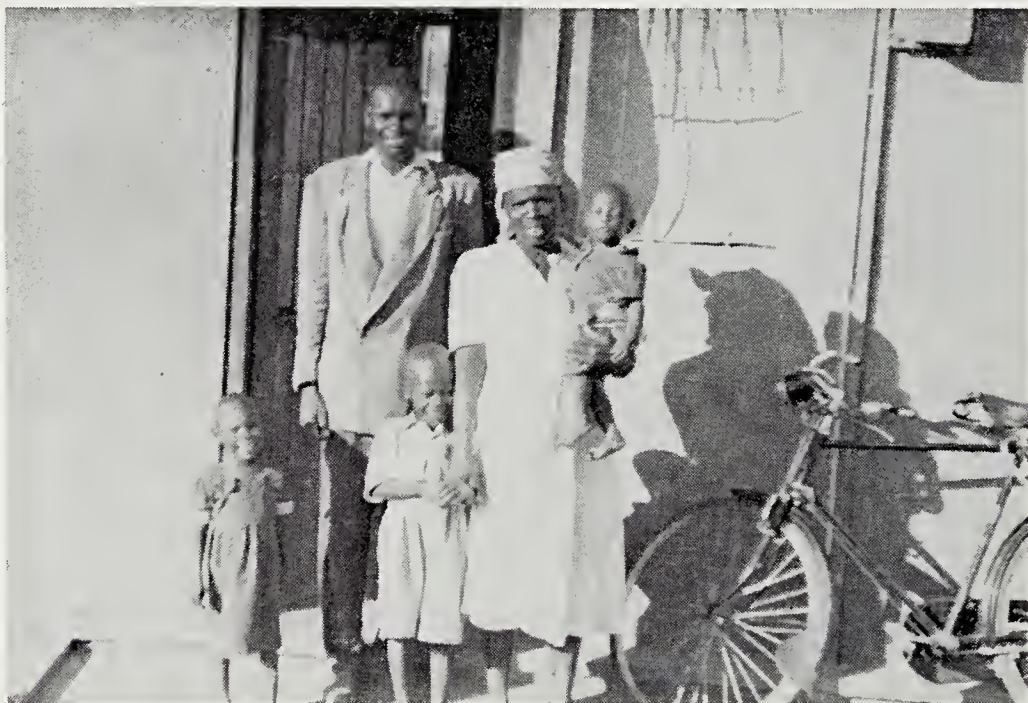
The flowers of Kenya are brightly colored. There are many flowering shrubs, trees and vines. The Nandi flame tree has clusters of blossoms of bright orange-red against its glossy dark green leaves. The gamirembi tree, or "peace tree" lights its torches before the leaves appear; and the bottle-brush tree displays its bristly red blossoms as confidently as a Fuller brush salesman. Aloes and red-hot poker, the pincushion, and varieties of gladiolus add their blends of red, yellow and orange.

Birds are gorgeous in coloring. The sunbirds glow like jewels among the flowers; and robins are orange from throat to tail.

In the forest there are snakes of many kinds. They have beautiful markings on their skins. The most poisonous one of all wears a pattern in blue, green, red and orange against a background of black, something like a design on a beaded belt.

Kenya is the home of many kinds of wild animals. You will be glad to know that the Kenya government is protecting some kinds of wild animals to keep them from being killed off by man. There are large animal reserves where animals may live in their natural habitat without danger of being attacked by man.

This family of Friends belongs to East Africa Yearly Meeting. They moved from their home in Kenya to Kampala, Uganda, where the father is pastor of the Friends meeting in the town. The three children were excited when they took the journey to Uganda with their mother to join their father in their new home. Their father had the house all ready for them, and they were happy to be with him again.





A New Meetinghouse is Built

Some Friends who lived near Mt. Elgon moved to a new location where they had more land to farm. They took their church and school along with them, and one of the first things they needed in their new community was a house for meeting and school.

At first they built a grass-walled, grass-thatched house to use immediately. Then they bought land and raised money for a better house with a metal roof. They left the sides of the house rather open, so the cool breezes could blow through. This house is used for meeting on Sunday and for school during the week.



Something New to Read

At the Friends Mission at Kaimosi there is a printing press. Right off the press came these little books in the vernacular, which you see being eagerly read. The little books tell what Christians believe about God, and they tell stories about Christians who have done different kinds of service for others. The man in the long white robe (called a konzu) is the headman of the village where these people live.

The books were brought to the village by a group of African Friends and a missionary, who came for a week-end visit to present the Christian message in different ways. On Saturday night they showed color slides of the life of Jesus to a large crowd. On Sunday morning they conducted a Sunday school for the children and a service of worship for everyone. All the children stayed for the sermon; it isn't every Sunday that they have the excitement of welcoming visitors.

Sunday Schools and Meetings

Wherever Friends have gone you will find churches and schools. In Kenya, the first meetinghouse is usually of mud and thatch, a schoolhouse during the week and a church on Sunday.

The children meet for Sunday school early, about eight o'clock, and almost always the teacher is the same person who teaches them at school during the week. After they are dismissed, they go home to have breakfast, and then all the family come back for the worship service.

When the group grows too large to crowd into a classroom, another building is put up nearby for a meetinghouse. Each person must bring his own seat, which may be a stool, a folding chair, or just a piece of cloth to spread out on the earth floor. For the person who comes without any of these, a bunch of leaves will do.

Women and girls sit on one side of the room and the men and boys on the other, just as Quakers in Western countries did long ago.

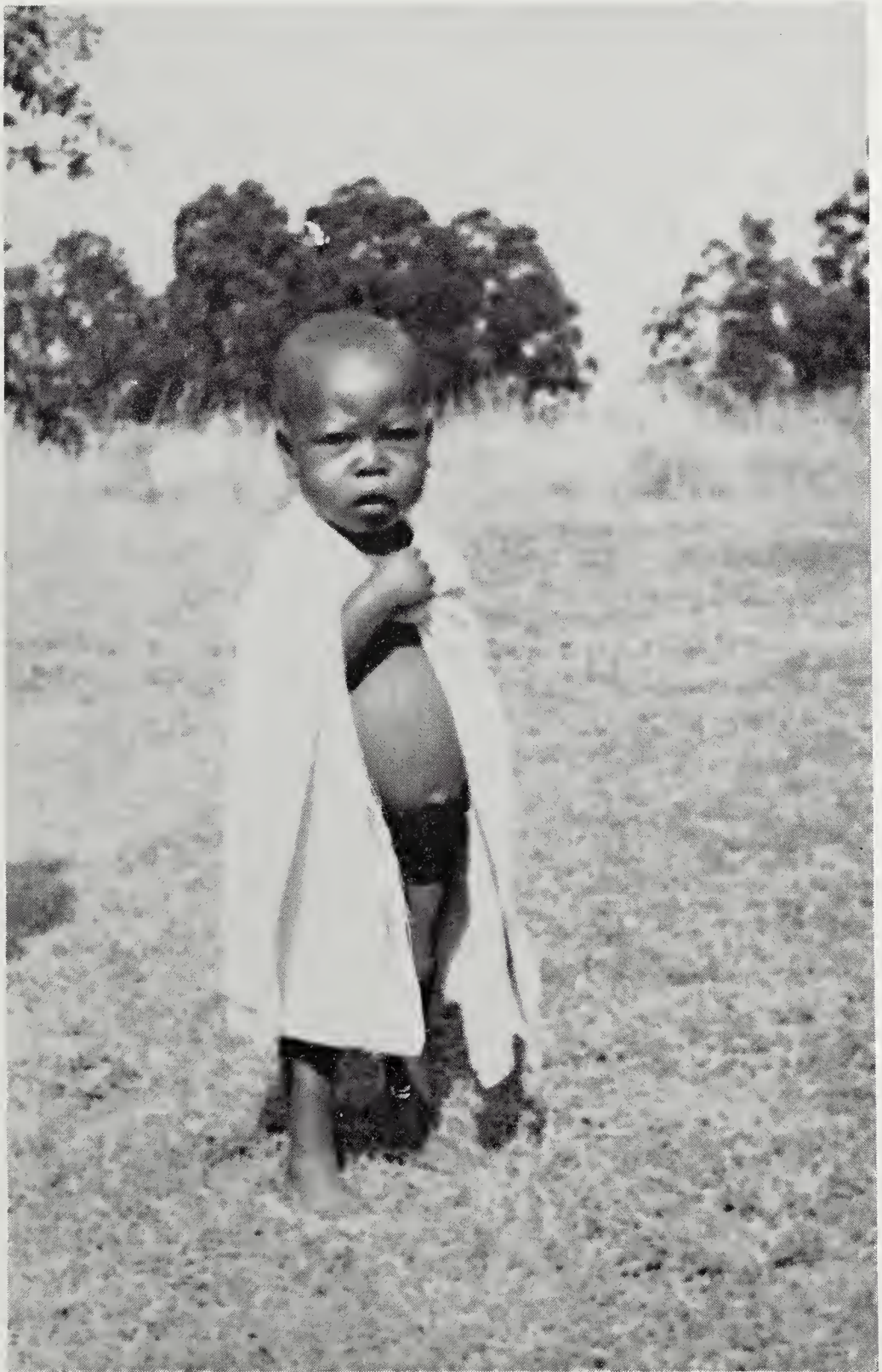


The village meetings do not have paid pastors. There are Elders and women leaders who preach on Sundays and in services at other times. Sometimes as many as three sermons are preached in one service. The people who have walked or cycled several miles to attend are not satisfied with just one hour for worship. Two hours isn't too long, and on special occasions meetings may last three hours or more. Babies do get hungry and the children get very tired of sitting still, so they are allowed to go outside.

Mothers with babies can sit outside under the low windows and listen. When the attendance record is taken, there may be as many people outside as inside.

There is always danger that a grass roof will catch fire and the building burn too quickly for anything inside to be saved. So, as soon as the members can raise money for bricks and a metal roof, they put up a fire-proof building. In every community there are Africans who know how to burn bricks. When a cement floor can replace the beaten earth floor, everyone is proud of the meetinghouse they have accomplished together.





Young Africa looks at us and asks, "Are you my friends?"



Twin Boys, Nathan and Abraham

Years ago twins were not welcome in African homes. It was believed that an evil spirit had sent one of them, so one of the pair was left to die. Now Christian parents are happy to have twins.

LIFE IN NYANZA PROVINCE

When a baby is born in a non-Christian home, there are no clothes ready for it, and no one has chosen a name. This custom has been handed down from the time when more babies died than lived to see the first birthday. The Africans have a proverb, "You don't make the baby's clothes until it is born."

If several children in a family have died, the next one born is named "Rubbish." He is wrapped in rags and left dirty. If you saw such a baby, you would think, "Surely the mother doesn't love him, or she would take better care of him." This is just what she wants the evil spirits to believe, so they will not cause this little one to die as the others did.

A tiny girl whose mother died soon after the baby was born was named "Forsaken." No one in the family knew how to feed her, so she was brought to the Friends Mission. She receives loving care and is gaining fast. She is a healthy, happy baby. When she is old enough to live on the diet of her village home, she will go back to her family.



Little Wegesa was born at harvest time, so they named him “Wegesa,” which means “harvest.” He is happy in the arms of his older brother, Wanyama, whose name means “Time of much meat.”



Sharing is Fun!

These boys at Friends Africa Mission are happy play-fellows. They enjoy sharing their toys, especially the little red wagon, that holds three close friends, while a fourth plays the part of horse. They all take turns at pulling the wagon, and that's why they all have fun.



Re-thatching Time

Many Africans still live in this kind of house. When the grass roof gets leaky, they pull off the old grass and put on a thick new thatch. In many villages brick houses are replacing the homes of the older type. Brick houses last longer, and floors of wood or cement are easier to keep clean and free of insect pests than the old floors of beaten earth.

Round houses are the easiest to build. A stick is driven into the ground, then a string made of banana fibers or sisal is tied to it. Someone takes the other end of the string and walks in a circle, marking the place where the wall is to be. Posts are set in the ground along this line, a few feet apart. Smaller trees or branches are fastened crossways between them and more poles are used to form the framework of the roof, which comes up to a sharp peak in the middle.

The walls are made of mud plastered on the framework. The roof is covered with long grass tied in bunches and fastened tightly, close together. This thick thatch really does keep out the rain. These houses are cool on hot days and comfortably warm at night.

Before the missionaries came, the houses were made without windows. Now every house has at least one window. Usually the window does not have a frame with panes of glass. It has a solid wooden shutter that can be opened when the sun shines and closed and locked securely to shut out rain, cold and thieves.

The floor is just earth, beaten very hard with sticks. Women and girls kneel, shoulder to shoulder, and sing a special song, as they bring down the sticks - thump, thump - in perfect rhythm. They have special songs for many different kinds of work. If you understood the words, you would know what they were doing, even if you could not see them.

The thatch hangs low over the side of the house and keeps the rain from spoiling the mud walls. The cows, sheep and goats stand close to the walls when the rains come. The overhanging thatch keeps them dry.



Bossy Takes A Bow

Bossy has a part in a very important occasion pictured above. This is a bridal feast, to which many gifts are brought in honor of the young couple. The blanket, as well as the calf, is a gift.

Wedding Feasts

Before the wedding ceremony the bride-to-be gives a feast at her home. She invites many friends, who come to see the man she is to marry. The friends bring gifts and sing songs in her honor.

The women and girls have a special dance, which is really a little springy, running step that keeps time with their singing.

The Christian Elders give advice, telling the bride-to-be that it is her duty to be a faithful wife and a good mother. God's blessing is asked upon the new home.

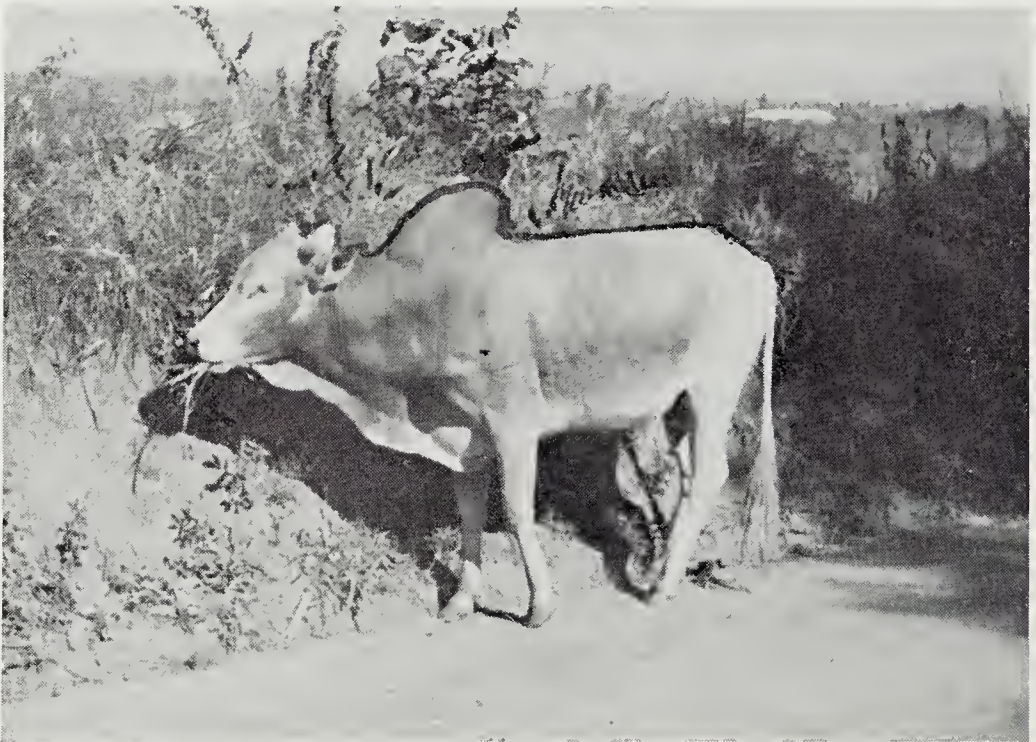
The feast takes a long time, but no one is in a hurry. All the food is cooked over open fires and there are many people to feed. Girl friends of the bride help cook the chickens or beef, the vegetables and the thick cornmeal mush that serves as bread at an African meal. They make the tea, serve the guests, clear the tables and wash the dishes. They enjoy the excitement and the fun of working together. Who knows? Perhaps the next feast may be their own!

Then the groom must have a feast at his house for his friends. They want to see the bride and offer their advice and best wishes. The Elders of his meeting come with counsel for the young couple and offer prayers for their new home. Again the guests are feasted and entertained. After spending most of the day in their host's house, the guests return in the evening to their own villages.

On the same day, or soon after, the wedding ceremony takes place and the young bride and groom go to their new home.



An African Home and Bank Account



The older African counts his wealth by the number of cattle he owns. The younger men, who go into business or professions, depend more on the shillings they earn.



A Woman Potter

Earthen pots have many uses. This one may be used for carrying water from the spring.

A Woman Potter

Women are the potters in Kenya. They choose the right kind of clay, prepare it carefully and then make long rolls of it, much as you take modeling clay and roll it between your hands to make a snake. Then they coil it around, one row upon the other to shape the pot just as they want it.

After it dries, it is baked in a hot fire and allowed to cool. Some leaves of a special kind are boiled in the pot to make it strong so it will not break easily.

Little pots are used for cooking all sorts of food over the open fire. The stove is just three stones set close together, with the fire in the middle. The pot is balanced carefully on the stones and small sticks are pushed into the fire to keep it burning. Children like to help do this!

Big pots are used for carrying water and also for making beer. In the old days only men and women too old, weak or crippled to work drank beer. It was not for those who were active and busy, those who had home responsibilities or village duties. It is sad to see that all ages are using beer now. It is very strong and causes the drinkers to quarrel and fight. Often they go out and beat people who have not been drinking with them. Many times wives are brought to the hospital for treatment of wounds after drunken husbands have come home and beaten them for no reason at all.

There are few homes which have stoves with ovens where bread can be baked, so bread is made by boiling cornmeal until it is very, very stiff. This is called "ubukima." The mother stands over the pot of boiling mush stirring it with a wooden paddle, around and around, slower and slower as it gets thicker. At last when she can hardly move the paddle, she takes the pot off the fire. She divides the bread among the members of the family and they eat it with their fingers, rolling it into a ball, pressing a hollow into it with the thumb, and using it for a spoon to scoop up the gravy or the greens. Then the spoon is eaten too. Hands are always washed before eating and again afterwards. Sometimes one of the older children holds the basin and pours the water over the hands of other members of the family, one at a time.

Bringing Water From the Spring



The waterpot is an important part of the home furnishings, for in it the women and girls of the family carry all the water used for cooking, cleaning or other household chores. The clothes to be laundered are carried to the spring or river, which is also the bathtub for all the family.

Look closely at this girl with her waterpot and you will see a doughnut-shaped ring between the pot and her head. This lets the waterpot sit safely on her head without having to be held on as she walks. While posing for her picture, she puts up her hands to steady the pot.



Christian Women

These two women are having a talk about their meeting. The one on the left has tribal markings on her face; the one on the right was brought up in a Christian home, so her parents did not have her go through this tribal custom.



Friends women in Kenya have their yearly conference out under the trees.



At a women's conference a Masai woman pleads that missionaries be sent to her tribe in South Nyanza.

Women and Girls

Girls who were educated in our Friends Schools have grown up to become leaders in the women's organization of East Africa Yearly Meeting. The Women's Annual Conference is an important event. Sometimes as many as 800 women are in attendance.

Rhoda Standa, the president, was in the United States for a visit and learned what Friends women were doing there. She brought back new ideas and suggestions to share with her own group. As mother of eight healthy children she can advise other mothers about child care. She is able to help them also with cooking, sewing and other home-making arts, which she learned at school and practices in her own home.

In the old tribal life women and girls were important only for the work they could do, the food they could raise in the garden, the children they could give to the tribe and the ways in which they could make the men and boys comfortable and happy.

In the Christian community of today women have places of importance in church work. Some of them can preach sermons as well as men. In business meetings they show wisdom in making decisions. They prove to be capable clerks, treasurers and chairmen of committees. There are women elders, teachers and nurses. Older women who never had a chance to go to school, are glad that these leaders can teach them many helpful things.

In some communities where the women are eager to learn, sewing classes have been organized. A woman teacher or a teacher's wife who has time to help them meets with them weekly. A missionary visits them once a month to encourage the class and to bring sewing materials to be sold at cost, because the women live far from shops or because they are charged too high prices in the shops for cloth of poor quality.



Beginners

These women are mothers, but they are just learning to sew. Many have never learned to use scissors before. The pair being used in this class was sent by friends in America.



On the mission farm at Kaimosi, African men have a chance to observe improved methods of farming and stock-feeding. One important thing they learn is dairying, so that their children may have milk in their daily diet. The African in the picture is interested in learning hog-raising, so that he can have a new cash product from his own farm. Here he is discussing the proper feeding of hogs with two missionary friends. The two boys in the picture are children of missionaries at Friends Africa Mission. They love to run down to the farm after school to see what is going on. Sometimes they have a chance to help.

Schools

If you could be suddenly whisked out of your own school and set down near one in Nyanza Province you would find many things which are different there.

First of all, you would notice the building. Most of the Primary Schools have long low buildings with mud walls and thatched roofs. But not far away you might see the foundation of a new building, or brick walls partly built. The old building would have wooden shutters at the windows and beaten earth floors. The desks and seats would be of rather rough boards that never saw varnish. You would notice how many children are crowded in a room, at least forty in each class, seated two at a desk. There is hardly room for the teacher to walk around them.

And you could not understand a word that was said! The Primary Schools use the local vernacular, and often the whole class shouts the answers in unison.

There are no pictures on the walls unless the teacher has hung up a roll of Bible pictures. There are no library books, no art materials, no audio-visual aids or any of the helps to learning which you find in your own classroom.

When the children finish the fourth grade of school, they take government examinations. Thousands of them in Kenya take the same examinations the same day. Only those who pass with sufficiently high marks can go on to Intermediate School. Far too many boys and girls get only four years of schooling.

Those who go to Intermediate School no longer use slates, for there is a note-book for each subject. The exercises for arithmetic, spelling, English, geography and hygiene are done each day and the notebooks handed in for correction.

The boys and girls must study hard, for at the end of their eighth year in school, they must take a difficult government examination called KAPE. Those who pass receive certificates, which they prize highly.

Only those who pass with the highest marks can go to Secondary School. Our Kamusinga Secondary School has sprung up very quickly. Instead of the corn field that was there before 1957, there are now fine new school buildings and staff houses with gay flowers in the yards, and in the vegetable gardens are individual plots with neat, carefully tended rows.

Besides those who are able to go on learning, there are many who must stop school and try to find work after finishing the eighth grade. Boys who go to towns and cities learn that jobs are hard to get. It is difficult to find a place to live and food to eat. They miss their families and friends and their own church group. They need the help of pastors who are sent by East Africa Yearly Meeting to be Christian leaders in these places.

You can see that more Secondary Schools are needed so that more students can have a high school education before going out to find work.



Primary School Boys

In their classes in Practical Agriculture, the boys in the Primary Schools learn how to use local materials to make grain bins for storing corn and millet.



Primary School Girls

African children enjoy singing games. These girls choose from each side one, who tries to pull the other over the line to her own side. The side that gets the larger number wins the game.



Christmas Pageant

This manger scene is part of a Christmas pageant given by the Friends Intermediate School at Chesamisi.



Women's Teacher Training Center

Students and teachers of the Women's Teacher Training Center at Kaimosi are justly proud of the awards won in needlework contests, from time to time.

When this picture was taken, the school as a whole had just won first prize in a regional contest, and received a sewing machine as a prize.



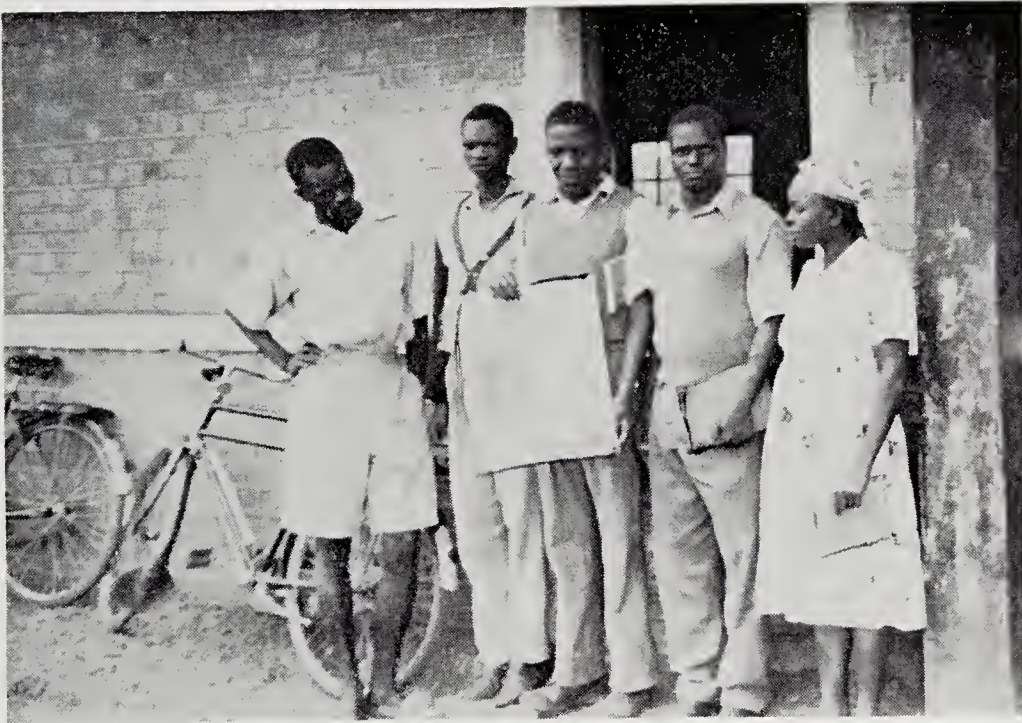
A Teacher and a Little Orphan
Girls Boarding School at Kaimosi

Little orphans need loving care. Kagai is typical of the ones who receive it at the Girls School at Kaimosi, where the students study and practice child care.



Opening of Friends Secondary School

At the opening of the Friends Secondary School at Kamusinga in 1957, the Governor of Kenya spoke the official word. Here he is greeting the Europeans, the Asian contractors, the headmaster of the school, and African friends outside the assembly hall.



Teachers Need Teaching Aids

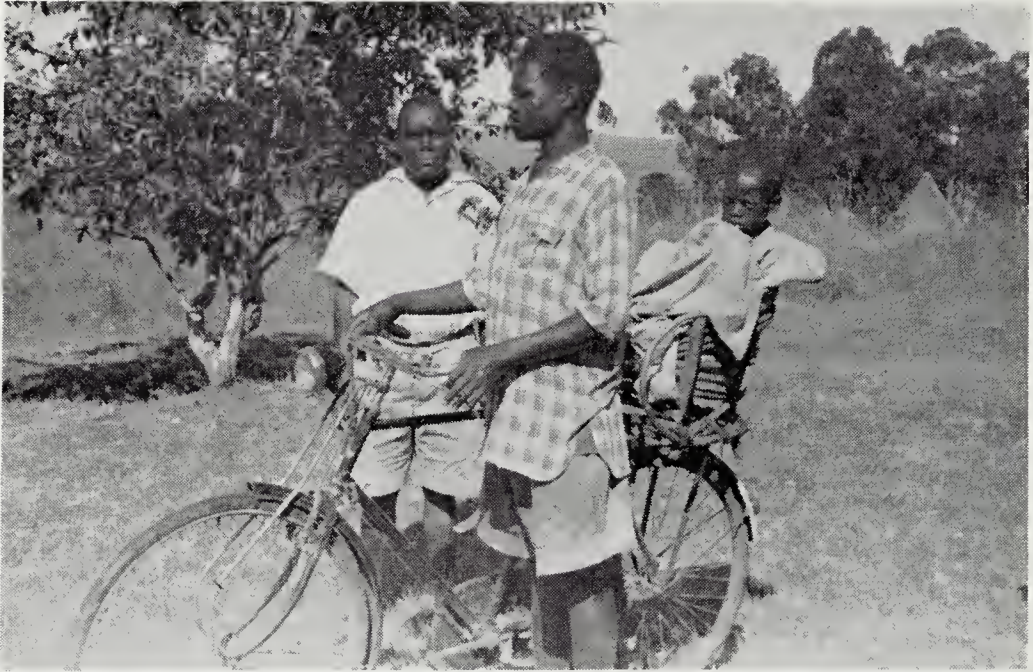
Teachers in our schools are pleased to get Bible pictures and maps to use in their classes in Religious Instruction.



This young man with a happy smile is a Christian who has come to say "Thank you" to the person who took him to Friends Hospital at Kaimosi months before. He has just been released from the TB ward of the Hospital, for he is cured.



Up the mountain and through the forest, to help some sick people who live far from a hospital or dispensary, goes this hospital truck.



This sick child is fortunate to have a clever father, who knows how to fix a chair on his bicycle so she can be brought to the dispensary.



This very sick little boy was brought to the children's ward of the Friends Hospital at Kaimosi. He had to stay for several days before he was well enough to be taken home.



Mother's back is the baby's cradle. These two are at Friends Hospital, Kaimosi, where the mother is having treatment. She is able to be outside now, and has just finished washing her bowl, from which she had her breakfast porridge.

Do you see the initials on her hospital gown? They stand for Friends Hospital.



These two are getting ready to go home from Friends Hospital at Kaimosi.

The baby could not be left at home when the mother came to the hospital. Now the mother is well, and is giving the baby a bath outside in the warm sunshine before they start home.

Along the Way

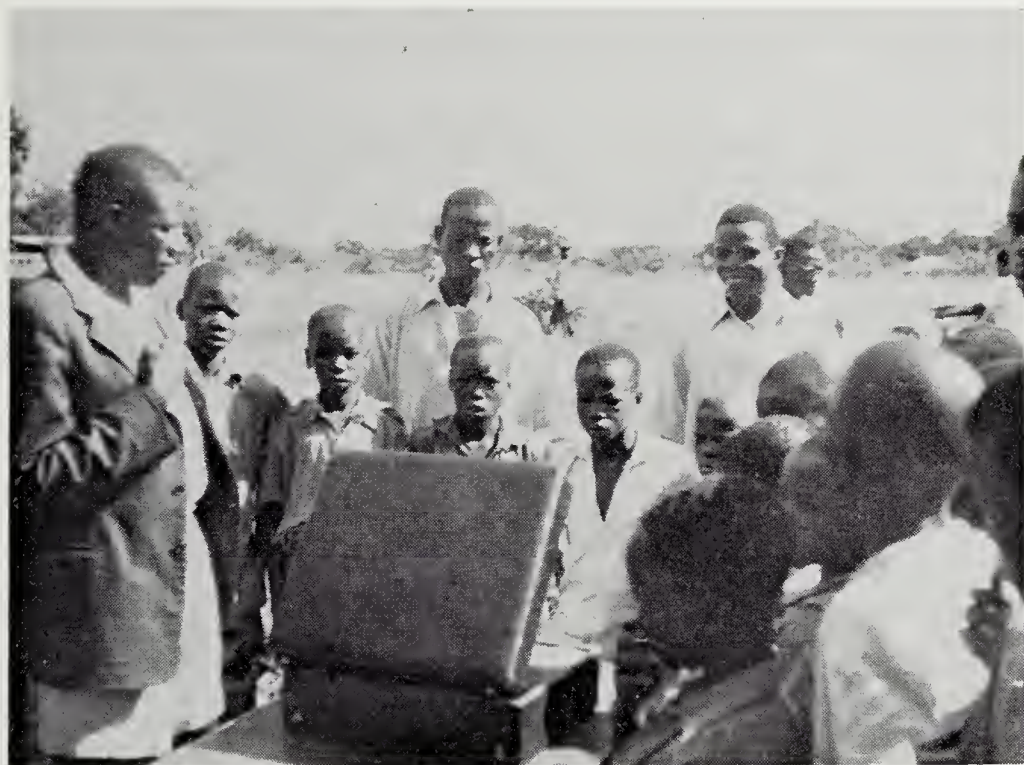


Bicycles carry interesting loads. This calf was born along the roadside, and is now riding comfortably on the carrier to the home farm, while the mother stops now and then to get a bite of grass.



White Clay on Dark Skins

These boys are going through traditional tribal customs so they can be counted as members of the tribe. They wear these stiff cow skins and a covering of white clay on faces and legs for a long time. Relatives whom they visit have feasts for them. This scene can still be observed among the tribes that surround Friends Africa Mission.



Listening to the Gospel in Their Own Language

When the victrola begins to speak and sing in the language they understand, children and adults come running to listen. Gospel records go to many places where the missionary has no chance to go.



A Christian Chief Asks for Help for His People

Chief Isaka talks to Benjamin Musinde, who is assistant superintendent of East Africa Yearly Meeting. He asks Friends to send Christian teachers for schools in his area. His people need medical help, too. The chief wants his tribe to have Christian leadership in as many departments of life as possible.

